Workplace Recovery

The journey so far

Officer Presenting: Jo Brown

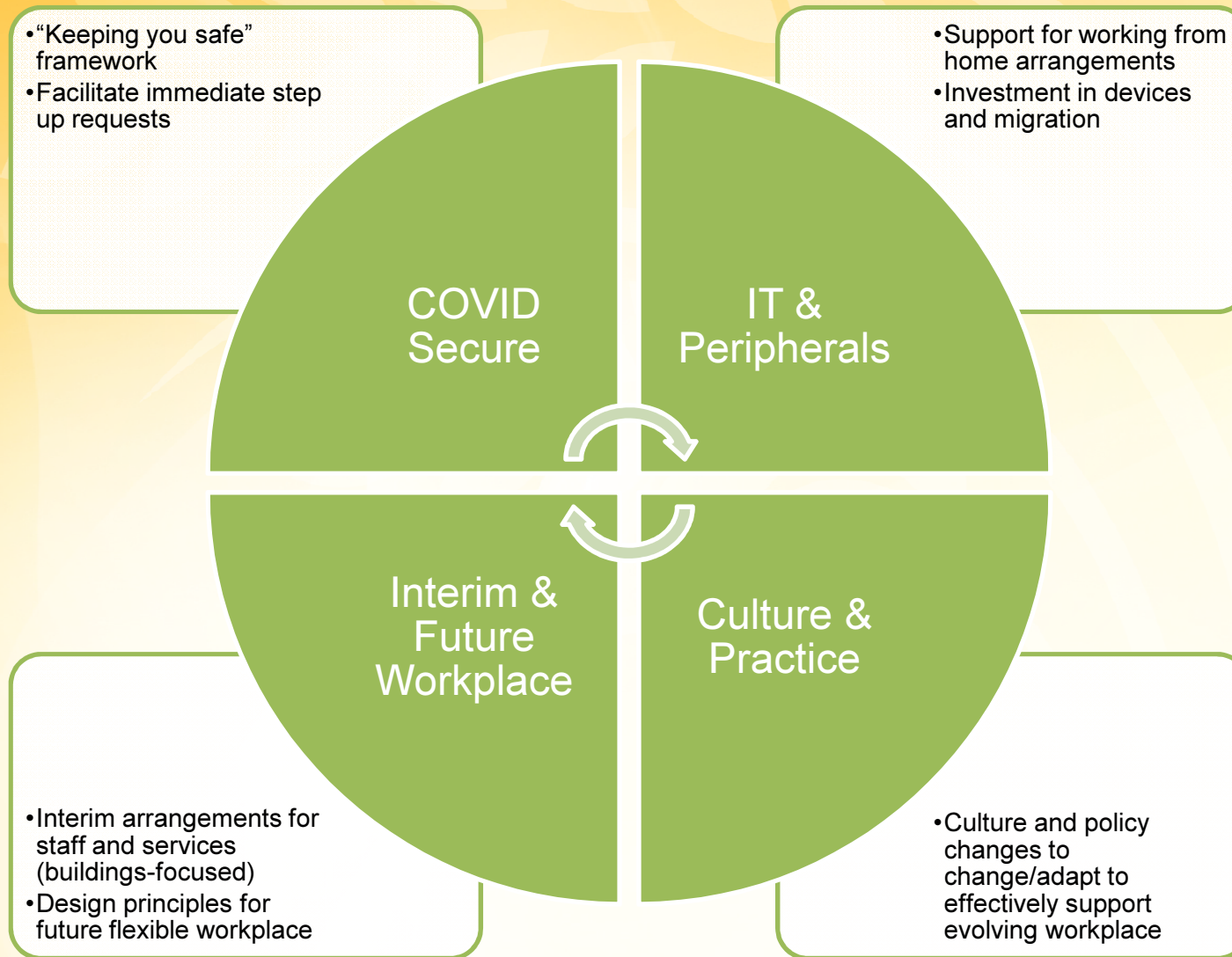*Working for a brighter future together*

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Background

- Workplace recovery was set up in June with the aim of:

  - Readying corporate buildings for staff to return, at least in part;

  - Stepping up areas such as registration services in a safe and supportive manner;

  - Equipping the workforce with the kit needed to undertake their role;

  - Providing advice and support to the workforce in a coordinated way;

  - Engaging with the workforce, champions and trade unions;

  - Linking across to the estates and ICT work in the transformation programme and help to articulate some design principles for the future design of the workplace.

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Working collaboratively

- A multi-disciplinary team established, to drive activity and momentum;

- Includes senior officers from all directorates, to ensure all perspectives considered and accounted for – not a 'done to' or one size fits all approach;

- Subgroups established to ensure focus and pace in the right areas.

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Workplace Recovery – areas of focus

- "Keeping you safe" framework
- Facilitate immediate step up requests

- Support for working from home arrangements
- Investment in devices and migration

COVID Secure

IT & Peripherals

Interim & Future Workplace

Culture & Practice

- Interim arrangements for staff and services (buildings-focused)
- Design principles for future flexible workplace

- Culture and policy changes to change/adapt to effectively support evolving workplace

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Covid-19 Response

Key findings

Response rate: 55%

No of responses: 1977 of 3601

djs employee research

Part of the DJS Research group

83%
Happy with level of line manager communication

83%
Agree communication from the organisation has been effective

75%
Agree the council has provided effective wellbeing support during Covid-19
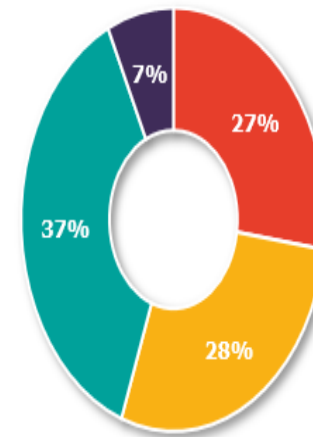
72%
Have had access to necessary systems and equipment

50%
Have been migrated to Teams

Top areas of concern in relation to working at usual working location(s)	% concerned
The use of 'hot-desks' / shared-desks	79%
The use of shared kitchens to make drinks, prepare and eat food	74%
That people will follow public health guidelines relating to social distancing when we all start returning to the 'new normal'	73%
The ventilation of working spaces	73%
The use of shared equipment (e.g. printers)	72%

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Concerns: what are employees most concerned about in relation to working at their usual place of work?

Since lockdown in March 2020, have you...

- 27% Regularly worked more than usual
- 28% Occasionally worked more than usual
- 37% Usually worked the same amount as usual
- 7% Worked less than usual

Working patterns: how have workloads changed during Covid-19?

The council's Covid-19 response

Cheshire East Council

djs employee research

Part of the DJS Research group

Views of the management of the response

The council has provided effective wellbeing support during Covid-19 — **75%**

I have the systems / equipment to work from home effectively — **72%**

I am happy with the amount of communication I have had with my manager — **83%**

The council's response to implementing social distancing and hygiene measures has been effective — **65%**

Communication from the council has been effective 83%

50% have migrated to Microsoft Teams — 50%

Top safety concerns when returning to usual work location

The use of 'hot-desks' / shared desks — **79%**

The use of shared kitchens to make drinks, prepare and eat food — **74%**

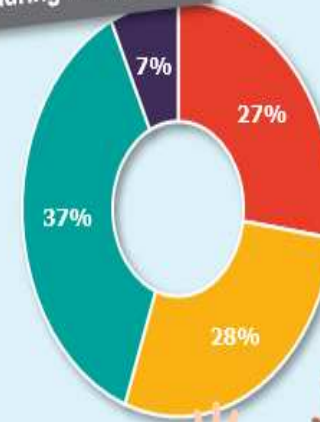The use of shared equipment (e.g. printers) — **72%**

That people will follow social distancing guidelines — **73%**
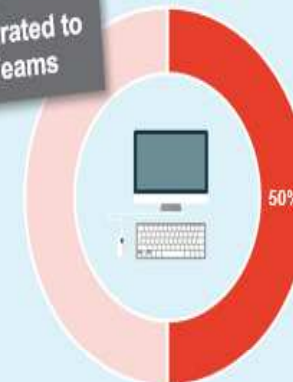
The ventilation of workspaces — **73%**

% concerned

Change in workload during Covid-19

- 7%
- 27% — Regularly worked more than usual
- 28% — Occasionally worked more than usual
- 37% — Usually worked the same amount as usual
- 7% — Worked less than usual

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Enabling and supporting workforce

Future of Work E-learning

Conversation Toolkits
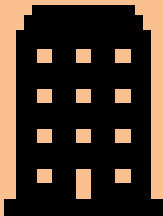(Work / Life Balance)

Support Sessions
(TLC / Manager)

Golden Practices

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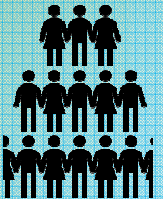Council

Launched "keeping you safe" framework

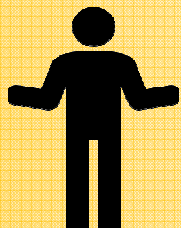**Keeping you safe**

Level 1: In the Workplace

COMPLETE
Corporate Buildings RA
Approved by TU

Level 2: As a Workforce

COMPLETE
Quality Assurance Completed

Level 3: As an Individual
Recommended for following staff:
Have underlying health conditions
Are pregnant
BAME ethnicity
White EU ethnicity and >70 years old

ONGOING
Revising Individual RA,
with BAME Network & Updated
Government Guidance

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How we are keeping you safe

These 5 steps are the backbone of our new way of working, and are the Government's "5 steps to working safely".

Carry out Covid Risk Assessment

Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures

Help people to work from home

Maintain 2m social distancing where possible

Where 2m is not possible, manage transmission risk

Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020

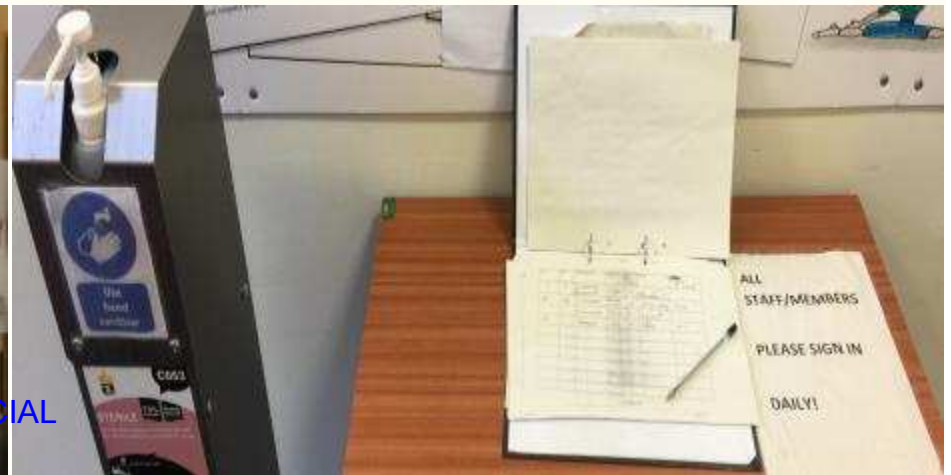We confirm we have complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19

• **FIVE STEPS TO SAFER WORKING TOGETHER** •

✓ We have carried out a **COVID-19 risk assessment** and shared the results with the people who work here

✓ We have **cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures** in line with guidance

✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **help people work from home**

✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **maintain a 2m distance** in the workplace

✓ Where people cannot be 2m apart, we have done everything practical to **manage transmission risk**

Employer _____ Date _____

Who to contact: _____ Your Health and Safety Representative _____
(or the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk or 0300 003 1647)

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Our Covid-secure measures

ONE PERSON PER LIFT

ONE PERSON PER LIFT

Cleaning Station

WAY OUT   DOWN ONLY

ALL STAFF/MEMBERS PLEASE SIGN IN DAILY!

Support at Home

c94% of staff have now been migrated to Win10 and M365.

Home working risk assessments - used to ensure staff working safely, with some repurposed kit from office buildings where appropriate. Staff also purchasing elements themselves, balanced against savings made not commuting.

Research with other councils found the majority were not making payments to staff but emphasising the benefits for most of homeworking.

Our Covid-secure buildings are still an option if people are struggling with mental health, wellbeing or the home working environment.

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Golden Practices for Staff

Our Golden Practices are designed to help you achieve the right balance between being productive and maintaining a positive approach to your health and wellbeing at work each day.

These are essential steps to take every working day

These are suggested steps to take regularly

Trust, confidence and availability

Your manager trusts you to get your job done wherever you are working. You feel confident to do your job and able to work flexibly to meet the demands of your role.

Starting your working day

Whether travelling to a building or working from home, how do you start your day? Does it include a healthy breakfast? A short walk? A mindful couple of minutes? Is your mind prepared for the day ahead?

Prepare your workspace

Don't forget the daily quick check: Is my chair at the right height? Is the computer in the correct position? Do I have enough light? etc.

Good morning all

Have a morning check in with each other using email, Teams etc.

Get up, get moving, throughout the day

Make a conscious effort to move regularly throughout the day, stay hydrated and take breaks between meetings where possible.

Respect the lunch break

As a general rule, avoid booking meetings between 12.30pm and 1.30pm to enable everyone, including yourself, to take a lunch break.

Plan quiet time

Book a couple of one-hour slots a week into your diary so that you can have some focus, planning or admin time. Take the opportunity to visit the Learning Lounge or complete courses as part of your job role.

Regular checking in

Make a point of asking open questions to check in with colleagues. What are you looking forward to working on this week? How are you feeling physically in your workspace (feeling comfortable, feeling safe?) How can I help you today?

Reach out

If you notice that you are not feeling quite right, your mood is low, you are struggling to sleep or unable to switch off your thoughts, then speak up and reach out for support. Your manager, a trusted colleague, a Time to Change Ambassador, or a Mental Health First Aider are just a few of the people that can support you.

Coffee time

Have a virtual coffee break once a week/fortnight, to catch up on all your team news.

Respect the end of day

Wherever possible, avoid arranging meetings after 5.00pm.

Switching off

End your day by switching off all devices and closing your workspace. Resist the temptation to answer a work call on your personal mobile after you have signed off. Take time to reflect on the day while doing an activity such as a short walk or a task that gives space for some mindfulness, ready for what the evening has to offer.

Communications, support and engagement

- We have adapted our communications & engagement channels to suit the virtual arrangements:

  - Cascade of messages through Chief Exec Vlogs, Wider Leadership Team, CEMART and bronze cells as needed;

  - Dedicated Workplace recovery cell and its senior rep's;

  - Staff FAQs – living document based on the most up-to-date guidance

  - Regular Team Voice articles and weekly staff and Member briefings;

  - Trade Union involvement;

  - Conversation With sessions;

  - Manager support sessions, Time to Listen and Chat sessions (both new during the pandemic);

  - Staff and member packs;

  - Champions – ongoing engagement and testing ideas;

  - Dedicated Centranet site accessible to all staff whether logged in corporately or not;

  - New support group for staff who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or who support a family member who is.

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Communication examples

Keeping you safe
Guidance to working in and visiting our COVID-Secure Buildings

Workplace Recovery

Release September 2020

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Member Advice Pack from Workplace Recovery

Release October 2020

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Enter Keywords

Coronavirus - COVID-19
Supporting you during the COVID-19 outbreak

Home / System Pages / Information for Staff

Cheshire East staff pages

Welcome to the Cheshire East staff pages. You can find resources for staff that you can access without needing to log into the Council's IT network (in most cases).

Covid-19 information for staff

- Staff briefings - 2 November 2020
- Your wellbeing
- Workplace Recovery - Guidance for staff and managers
- COVID-19 Advice to staff - your questions answered (MS Word, 26KB)

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Flexible, proactive and responsive

- The situation remains fluid as we enter lockdowns, move between tiers and so on:

    - Complexities for our FAQs arise as guidance changes or new scenarios emerge – dealt with proactively, collaboratively and promptly;

    - Some staff live outside of the CEC area, so dealing with two sets of arrangements;

    - Additional asks/ requirements placed on councils.

- Increased pressure on the front line - we are responding to this with a joint planning piece, seeking to identify additional capacity and scenario plan to ensure we can support these critical services.

- Also examining the pressures elsewhere to see where we can pause activity and release capacity.

Going forward

- Trade Unions have reported they are happy with the engagement and support they've seen;

- Similarly, staff have said they feel connected to what is going on;

- We will continue to listen and where messages aren't getting through via the channels mentioned, we will continue to flex and adapt our approach.

- Additional support will be developed and put in place as needs are identified e.g. through our capacity planning work, e-learning, specific sessions for staff and managers.

Looking to the future (beyond COVID):

Core messages that we are continuing to emphasise with our staff are:
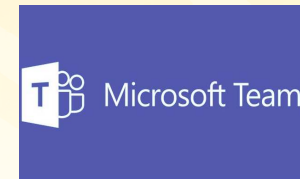
 Flexible

 Digital

 Collaborative

Our way of working has changed.

Our workplace has changed,
and we have the opportunity to accelerate our transformation.

We will keep listening and engaging
as we continue to develop our future working arrangements.

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